

TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION THROUGH VOICE OF AMERICA (VOA) SPECIAL ENGLISH BROADCAST

*(A Pre-Experimental study to Tenth Grade Students in Muhammadiyah
Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) of Ketapang in Academic Year 2011/2012)*

An Article

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Abstrak: Artikel ini berkaitan dengan pemahaman siswa terhadap listening comprehension. Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast digunakan sebagai materi dalam pengajaran listening comprehension kepada siswa kelas X Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Muhammadiyah Ketapang pada tahun Akademik 2011/2012. Tujuan melakukan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui seberapa efektif penggunaan VOA special English broadcast dalam pengajaran listening comprehension. Metode penelitian artikel ini adalah pra - eksperimental dengan siswa XC sebagai sampel. Sebagai hasilnya, ditemukan bahwa perhitungan dari effect size (ES) adalah 1.27, itu berarti bahwa pengajaran listening comprehension melalui VOA special English broadcast sangat efektif.

Kata Kunci : Voice of America, listening comprehension

Abstract: This article concerned with the students' listening comprehension. Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast was used as material in teaching listening comprehension to the tenth grade students of sekolah menengah atas (SMA) Muhammadiyah Ketapang in Academic year 2011/2012. The purposed of conducting the research was to know how effective the use of VOA special English broadcast in teaching listening comprehension. The method of this article is a pre – experimental research with students of XC as the sample. As the result, it was found that the effect size (ES) calculation is 1.27; it means that teaching listening comprehension through VOA special English broadcast is highly effective.

Key words: Voice of America, listening comprehension

Listening is the basic language skill in language learning. It is the medium through which people gain a large portion of their information, their education, their understanding of the world appreciation. Therefore, it is vital importance that students are taught to listen effectively and critically in English language teaching.

As an input skill, listening play a crucial role in students' language development. Students actively involve themselves in the interpretation of what they hear, bring their own background knowledge and linguistic knowledge to bear on the information contained in the oral text.

According to Nation and Newton (2009:38) states "Listening is the way of learning the language. It gives the learner information from which to build up the knowledge necessary for using the language". Therefore listening is the skill which required someone to listen well to somebody. When listening, a

person has willingness and a competence to understand what is said. At this process, a person tends to pay conscious attention to what is being said in order to understand it.

In listening activity, the learners comprehend the messages being listened. They must understand the message as it is presented, effective listening requires the ability to organize and remember what is presented.

In listening comprehension process, listeners use knowledge to understand the meaning. The knowledge includes the knowledge of language about what is said, about the situation in which speech occurs and background knowledge of language. "Listening comprehension is an achieved process of constructing meaning, and that done by applying knowledge to incoming sound". In other words, listening is active process by which students fit with what they hear and what they already know.

Listening comprehension is divided into two processes that are involved in understanding spoken discourse. They are bottom – up and top – down processing. Brown (2006:2) explains "Bottom –up processing means using the information we have about sounds, word meanings, and discourse makers like first, then and after that assemble our understanding of what we read or hear one step at a time. Top – down processing means using our prior knowledge and experiences". Furthermore, Richards (2008:7) explains "listening comprehension involved two complementary processes: bottom – up and top – down process. The processes are identified as follow: (1) The bottom – up processing refers to using the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message. (2)The top – down refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of message".

Thus, the teachers use bottom – up process when their students construct meaning by using the information they such as sounds, word meaning, and discourse makers and then gradually combining all the information increasingly from the phoneme level up to discourse level features. Meanwhile, teachers use top – down process when their students' previous knowledge or information such as topic or other knowledge in long time memory to help them comprehend what they read or hear.

As a matter of fact, it was found that the tenth grade students of Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Muhammadiyah Ketapang were not yet able to comprehend the news item being listened well. It was because the students were not used to listening to native speakers' speaking English. The students were only used to listen to the teacher's speaking English when they were taught listening materials. Besides, the English teacher often used listening materials in the textbook which did not provide any audio for the listening materials.

With the development of technology, the teachers have access to many teaching resources. Teachers can take materials from various sources to attract the students' attention and increase their motivation in listening comprehension. One of the resources is online broadcast (Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast).

VOA special English broadcast is an authentic material that can help the students to hear natural language or real speech from native speaker in real life. For the English teacher can download it in internet and choose the form of VOA (audio, video, audiovisual or multimedia) in accordance with their material.

According to Nan and Mingfang (2009:29) “VOA special English program uses a basic vocabulary of 1.500 English words to deliver interesting written and audio reports on news, music, language, culture, and other topics. Most of vocabulary consists of high frequency words, although some words are more difficult when reports deal with topics like medicine and science”.

A variety of materials can attract students’ attention and increase their motivation in listening comprehension. Having appropriate English teaching materials of certain field of study is one of the requirements to make the teaching and learning process effective. Hutchinson and waters (1987:107) states “materials are as the means to provide a stimulus to learn”. So, it is essential to develop the material to be attractive, creative, and innovative.

In this case, news items text were chosen as the teaching materials to achieve the teaching and learning objectives. . According to Amarain, et al (2009) explained news item text: a text which informs readers about events of the day which are considered newsworthy or important. Some language features used in news item as follows: First the use of action verbs, saying verbs, passive sentences, simple past tense. The second material process to retell the event. The third projecting verbal processes in sources stages. The fourth information on the use of headlines. Its generic structure consists of three parts: main event (recounts the events in summary form), background events (elaborate what happened, to whom, in what circumstances), and resource of information (comments by participants, witnesses to and authorities expert on the event). The writer choosed this text because it is one of the text that must be learned by tenth grade students. Besides, The VOA special English Broadcast included in news items text that should be useful for the students’ real-life. In addition it is relevant to what being recommended by the curriculum.

In teaching listening, it is presented in several sessions, they are pre-listening, whilst – listening and post listening (Richards, 2008). Thus, the process of teaching listening comprehension through VOA special English broadcast were as follows: Pre-listening activities (a) Guiding to link background information through showing the pictures and asks some questions to relate with the topic. (b) Asking to make a group. (c) Asking to match the video of broadcast without sound and practice (task 1). Whilst listening activities (a) Asking to watch the video of broadcast with sound and practice (task II). (b) Explaining the VOA special English broadcast about the possible participant’s situations, places and grammar structure of the broadcast. Post-listening activity (a) Summarizing the lesson.

In order to know how well the students comprehend what they have listened to the materials being presented. Therefore, it requires the administration of a test to obtain data and feedback information about the

achievements that have been held form learning. Test is one way of assessment which is designed in accordance with the basic competence or indicators that will be assed

METHOD

Pre – experimental is a research that applies one group the pre-test and post-test and there is no control group (Cohen,et, al, 2000). So, to answer the research problem the writer used pre-experimental as the method.

The procedure of pre-experimental study which applied in this research was described in the following steps:(a)The pre-test was held on May 21, 2012. The pre-test was given to 36 tenth grade students. It was given before the teaching was held the purpose was to know the students' pre condition for listening comprehension through VOA special English broadcast. The result of pre – test was analyzed. (b)The treatment was teaching listening comprehension through VOA special English broadcast to tenth grade students. It was held three times on May 22, May 23 and March 29, 2012. The treatment was given step by step continually.(c)After having the treatment, the students were tested to see whether the treatments influenced the students' achievement. The post-test was held on May 30, 2012.(d)In analyzing the research result, the writer computed the students' individual score, the mean score of the tests, the level of significance and the effect size of the treatment.

The population of this research was the tenth grade students in Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Muhammadiyah in academic year 2011/2012. The students consisted of 184 students from 5 classes, they were: XA which consisted of 36 students, XB which consisted of 34 students, XC which consisted of 36 students, XD which consisted of 39 students and XE which consisted of 39 students. As the sample, the writer used cluster sampling and took 36 students in class XC.

The writer applied measurement technique to collect the data. The measurements technique in this research was through written test. This test was administrated twice. First, pre-test was conducted to collect the data before the experiment. Second, post-test was conducted to collect the data after the treatment has been given.

Technique of data analysis was applied by calculation the means score of the students pre-test and post-test and then continued by calculating the t-test. Finally the formulation of effect size was practiced in order to find out the answer of the problem. It is as follow: $ES = t \sqrt{1/N}$. The criteria of the effect size can be classified as follow:

Table 1
Table of Effect Size

$ES \leq 0.2$	Low
$0.2 < ES \leq 0.8$	Moderate
$ES > 0.8$	High

In this research, the writer offered Voice of America (VOA) special English Broadcast record and chosen news items as materials. It would help the students to comprehend the text and they can listen the text even better. The writer believed that by using VOA special English Broadcast to practice their listening, the students would improve their understanding of news item, and also improved the structures. Based on the lesson plan created by researcher, the steps are teaching listening are: (1) Pre-activity (10 Minutes), in pre-activity, the researcher needed to know prior knowledge about the material by showing some pictures and asking some questions regarding the topic for example: (a) What do you think about picture?, (b) Do you usually hear news?, (c) Where do you usually hear news?. After that, the researcher plays a video VOA special English Broadcast without sound and asks some questions about the video for example: (1) What is the topic of the news?, (2) What is channel the news?. (2) Whilst-activity (60 minutes), In whilst-activity, the researcher asks the students to watch again the video with sound and answer the questions in worksheet. After that, the researcher explains about VOA special English Broadcast and its components. Next, the researcher asks students to watch and do exercise in worksheet. Then, the researcher assessed their exercises. (3)Post-activity (20 minutes). In post –activity the researcher and students conclude the lesson together. The post-activity was last step to close the lesson.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

From the result of this research, there were two groups of data, which were pre-test and post-test data. It gathered used written test where the students listen VOA special English Broadcast record to comprehend the message from the text.

The data of students pre-test and post-test are shown in table 2:

Table 2
The Students' Total Score of Pre-Test and Post-Test

No	Students's code	X1	X2
1	Xc1	6	7
2	Xc2	3	4
3	Xc3	1	5
4	Xc4	5	7
5	Xc5	6	8
6	Xc6	4	7
7	Xc7	3	7
8	Xc8	4	5
9	Xc9	5	6
10	Xc10	6	7
11	Xc11	5	8
12	Xc12	4	6

13	Xc13	7	8
14	Xc14	5	7
15	Xc15	3	7
16	Xc16	1	7
17	Xc17	6	8
18	Xc18	4	5
19	Xc19	5	6
20	Xc20	4	6
21	Xc21	4	6
22	Xc22	3	5
23	Xc23	4	5
24	Xc24	6	7
25	Xc25	5	6
26	Xc26	6	7
27	Xc27	5	6
28	Xc28	6	7
29	Xc29	7	8
30	Xc30	7	8
31	Xc31	4	7
32	Xc32	0	5
33	Xc33	7	8
34	Xc34	4	6
35	Xc35	6	7
36	Xc36	5	6
SUM(Σ)		166	235

The results of data are shown in table 3:

Table 3

Table of analysis pre-test and post-test

Description	Score
Highest score in pre-test	7
Lowest score in pre-test	0
Total score in pre-test	166
Mean score in pre-test	4.61
The Students pass in pre-test	27%
The Students who doesn't pass pre-test	73%
Highest score in post-test	8
Lowest score in post-test	4
Total score in Post-test	235
Mean score in post-test	6.52
The Students in pass post-test	80%
The Students who doesn't pass post-test	20%

Based on the table pre-test and post-test above, described that the highest score in pre-test was 7, the lowest score in pre-test was 0, the total score was 166, and the mean score was 4.61. In the post-test, the highest score was 8, the lowest score was 4, the total score was 235, and the mean score was 6.52.

To know how well the students comprehend what they have listened to the materials being presented. It required a test to listen VOA special English Broadcast record. The students pass the test if they got score 6 to 100. From on the table 3 above, the students pass in pre-test was 27%, and the students doesn't pass in pre-test was 73%. In the post-test, the students pass in post-test was 80% and the students doesn't pass in post-test was 20%. It means the VOA special English Broadcast could increase the students' achievement in learning listening comprehension.

To compute the ES, the researcher applied several steps, as follows: (a) the calculation of difference of the deviation with mean deviation was 58.75. (b) The calculation of mean deviation was 1.91. (c) The calculation of t-test was

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{Xd}{N(N-1)}}}$$

$$= \frac{1.91}{\sqrt{\frac{58.75}{36(36-1)}}} = 9.09$$

t value was 9.09 with the degree of freedom (*df*=*N*-1) or (36-1=35) was significant at the level 0.05. The critical value for 0.05 levels with 35 *df* shows 2.042.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of VOA special English broadcast in teaching listening comprehension to tenth grade students in second semester was determined by using Effect Size (ES) computation. The computation of the ES was

$$ES = t \sqrt{1/N}$$

$$ES = 9.09 \sqrt{1/36} = 1.27$$

Based on the criteria of the effect size, $ES > 0.8$ is categorized high (effective). It means that the use of VOA special English broadcast in teaching listening comprehension is categorized highly effective.

Discussion

The writer conducted this research in three sequences. They were pre-test, treatments and post-test. The pre-test was held on May 21st, 2012. It was taken by 36 students of class XC. The pre-test was given before teaching listening by using Recorded VOA special English broadcast was held. The purpose was to obtain the data especially to know the students' pre-condition before the treatment was given.

The treatments were held three times. The first meeting was on May 22nd, 2012. The second meeting was on May 23th, 2012 and the third meeting was on May 29th, 2012. During the treatments process, the writer used Recorded VOA special English broadcast as material in teaching listening. In the meeting, the writer explained about news item and VOA. The writer also taught the students about passive voice, gave some examples of passive voice, irregular verbs and regular verbs as well. During the discussion of listening comprehension in each meeting, the students and the writer discussed about the content, new vocabularies and detailed information of the VOA. The last, the writer conducted post test, it was held on May 30th, 2012. The post-test was given after the treatments have completed listening teaching by using Recorded VOA special English broadcast was held. The purpose was to obtain the data especially to know the students' condition after the treatment had been given.

From the data analysis, the writer found that there is an increase of students' score after the treatment. The mean score of pre-test was 4.61 and categorized as poor to average. After giving the pre-test, then the treatment was administrated for three times. The next step of the research was conducted the post – test and the mean score of post-test was 6.52. It could be categorized as average to good. The score indicated that the students' performance in post-test was better than in the pre-test. It is in accordance with the explanation of Oguz and Bahar (2008) about some advantages of using authentic material in language teaching, such as students might have high interest value because of their relevance to the world, it can keep the students informed about what is happening in the world they live. Besides, when the authentic material is used in class, the students will get the chance to read, rehearse, listen to, practice, use and learn the language via the materials that can be seen, examined, touched and listened to.

The weakness of VOA was the VOA should be helped by audiocity software to cut and controlled the speed speaking of broadcaster. Limiting theme was relevant with students' life, so that teacher need to be selective to use the material.

Moreover, to determine the significance of the research, the whole data was put in t-test and the result of t-test was compared to the t-table. In this research the writer applied the significance of 5% with df (N-1) $36-1 = 35$ is 2.042. In this case the calculation showed that the t value was higher than t-table critical value ($9.09 > 2.042$). Based on calculating the significance's score of pre-test and post-test, the writer measured the effect size (ES) of the treatment. From the result of effect size calculation where the value of ES is 1.27 which was categorized as high indicated that the use of voice of America (VOA) s material to teach listening comprehension in second semesters is highly effective.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research found out the effectiveness of Voice of America special English Broadcast in teaching listening comprehension. This research was conducted in SMA Negeri Muhammadiyah Ketapang Academic

Year 2011/2012 for tenth grade students. Besides improving the students listening comprehension, the researcher found that it could make the students motivated in teaching and learning process.

From the data analysis, it showed that Voice of America special English broadcast was effective to teach listening comprehension. It was proved by the result of the effect size which the result from the computation was (1.27). It was indicated highly effective.

Besides, Voice of America special English broadcast as material could increase students' achievement in listening comprehension. It was shown by the t-test which showed the t-value was higher than t-table ($9.09 > 2.042$) and it means that there was a significant difference was between pre-test score and post-test score.

This research hopefully could give contribution to the development of English subject especially in teaching listening comprehension. VOA special English Broadcast could be uses as an alternative material for teaching listening comprehension.

SUGGESTION

The writer provides some constructive suggestions as follow: (1) the teacher should provide variations of teaching techniques in order to avoid the students' boredom in learning. (2) VOA special English broadcast is advisable for the teacher to use in teaching listening in the aim of developing the students listening comprehension well. (3) In using VOA, the teacher should be creative in choosing the appropriate topic and examples. Those should be familiar and interesting for the students. (4) Using authentic materials can play multiple roles in language teaching; enable students to interact with real language and content rather than text book or teacher made especially the form (grammar and vocabulary).

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